

EAP Matters **The Power of Forgiveness**

Forgiveness is . . .

- A decision to let go of resentment and anger towards yourself and others.
- Making a choice to live in the present instead of holding onto the past.
- Recognizing people make mistakes.

FORGIVENESS
is giving up the
HOPE
that the past could have been
ANY different

Forgiveness is not . . .

- Stuffing emotions or pretending something did not happen.
- Excusing the person or condoning the behavior.
- Reconciliation with the person. That is a separate decision based on what is best for you.

5 Steps to Forgiveness . . .

Acknowledge your inner anger and pain. Work through those emotions by talking about them to a trusted person and/or expressing them in other ways, such as journaling.

Develop Empathy and Compassion by asking yourself what could be going on with the person who harmed you. Was she being selfish or self-absorbed? Did he understand that this could hurt you? Was she acting out something that had happened to her?



Forgive yourself for your role in the relationship or situation. Maybe you didn't stand up for yourself or you didn't recognize the signs of a person or situation that could harm you.

Verbalize forgiveness statements to yourself. After identifying the other's transgressions, say the following: "I fully and freely forgive _____ (person's name) for _____ (what the person did)". Say it several times out loud every day until you sense you have let go of the inner resentment. (You will know forgiveness has begun when you think of the people who hurt you and can wish them well.) **Then** do these same statements for yourself. Forgive yourself for what you did, didn't do, or didn't know.

Learn and protect yourself. Learn from this situation so you can avoid something similar in the future and develop the skills to protect yourself from further victimization.

"As long as you don't forgive, who and whatever it is will occupy a rent-free space in your mind." - Isabelle Holland

We, at **Alegent Creighton Health Employee Assistance Program**, are here to help you with any personal or workplace issues. Call 402-398-5566 or 800-847-4975 for an appointment.

